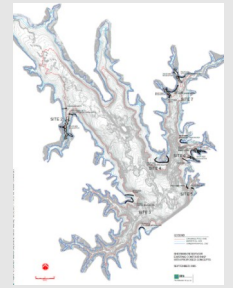


Sherman Reservoir

2011 Angler Survey Summary

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Brad Eifert, Fisheries Biologist



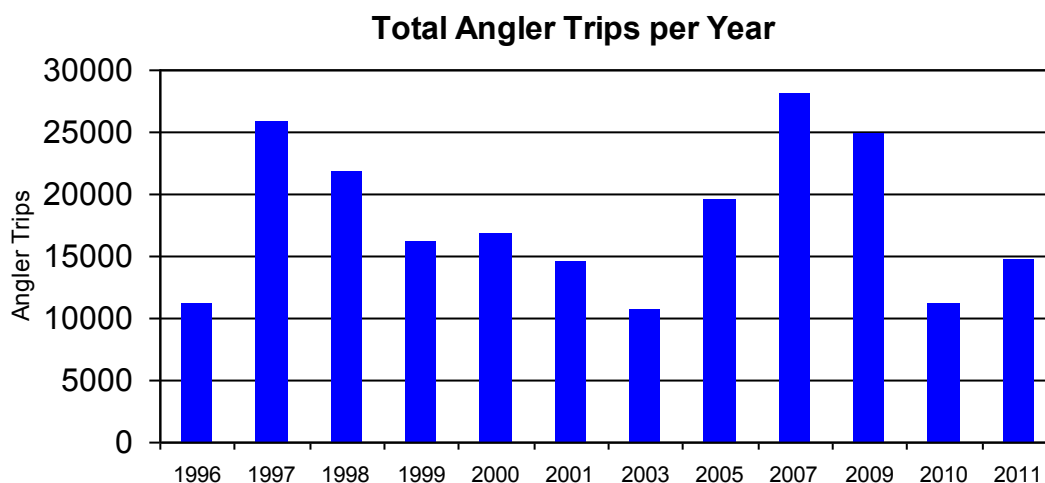
An angler survey was completed at Sherman Reservoir in 2011 from April through October. During the survey, anglers were counted and interviewed on 14 week days and 6 weekend days per month. In total, there were 134 days surveyed and 865 interviews completed during the seven month time period. Angler surveys provide estimates of fishing effort, catch and harvest rates, catch per hour, and size structure of the fish caught. Starting in 2009, a contract for annual angler surveys at Sherman was planned through 2013.

The following text and graphs provide summaries of this year's survey with comparison to past years.

Fishing Effort Summary

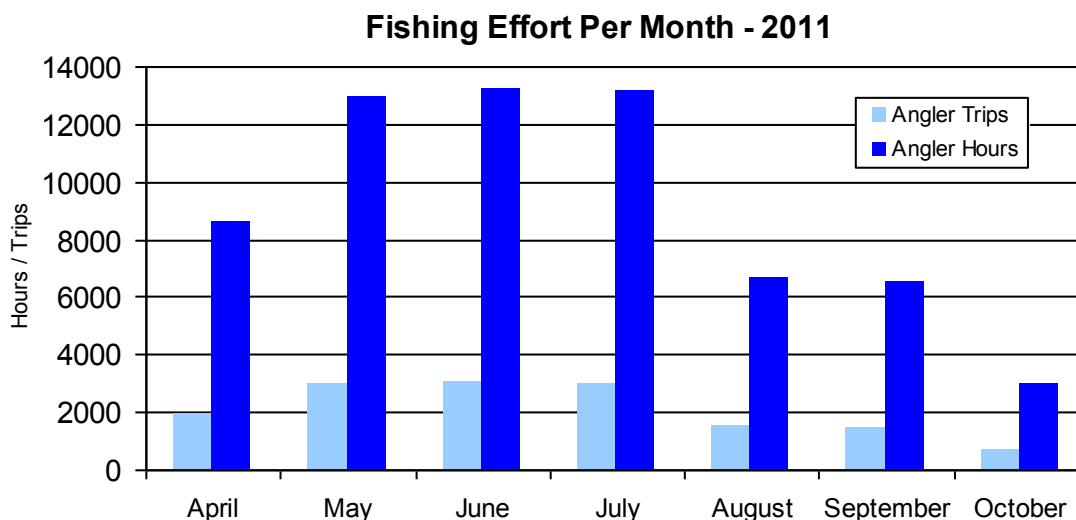
An estimated 14,631 angler trips were made to Sherman Reservoir during the seven month survey period in 2011. While there was an increase in the number of anglers 2011, angler use remained lower than the 12 year average of 17,921 trips.

Anglers spent 64,176 hours fishing (23 hrs/acre), with the average trip lasting 4.4 hours. Boat anglers comprised 77% of the total trips and 33% were bank anglers. The following Nebraska counties contributed the most angler trips: Buffalo (19%), Hall (16%), Sherman (16%), Howard (8%), Custer (7%) and Hamilton (6%). While anglers from five other states fished Sherman during 2011, the non-resident anglers only made up 1% of all anglers utilizing the reservoir.



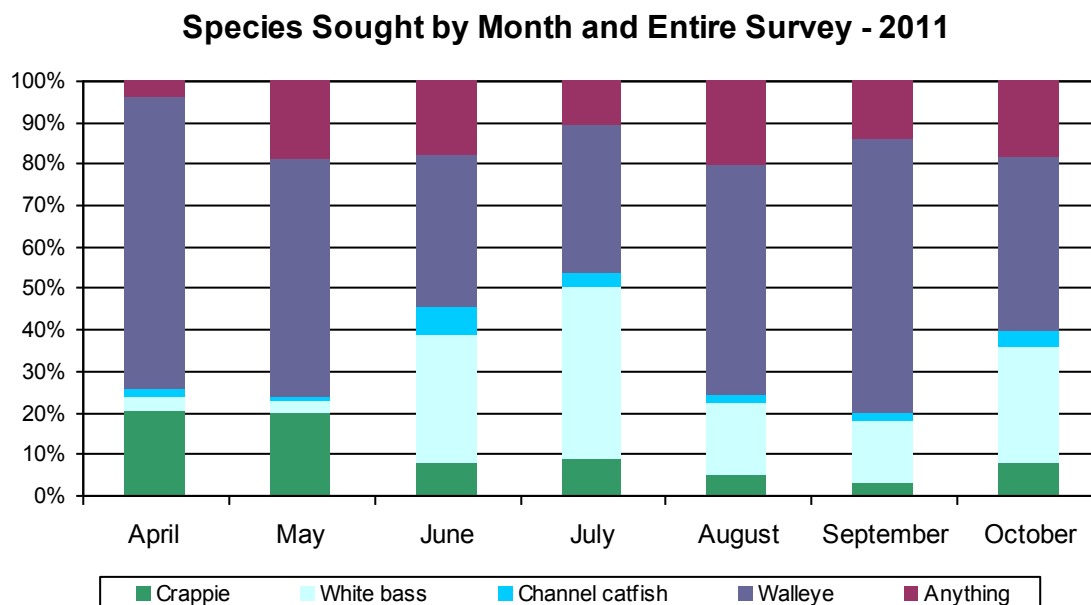
Fishing Effort by Month

Fishing pressure was highest during the months of June, July and August. High water levels in the reservoir and good fishing success for walleye and white bass increased angler use during August and September.



Fish Species Sought by Anglers

Walleye were the most sought species throughout the year at Sherman. Crappie fishing effort was highest in April and May, while anglers seeking white bass peaked in July. Catfish angling effort was low throughout the year. Anglers who were seeking anything they could catch were generally high from May through October. Over the entire survey period, 56% of Sherman anglers sought walleye, 13% sought crappie, 8% white bass, 4% channel catfish, and 19% fished for anything.



Channel Catfish

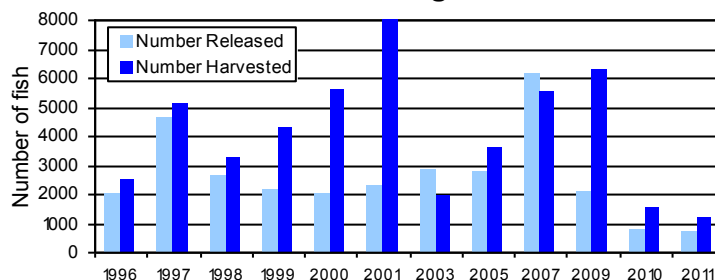
2011 Regulations: *No length limit, 5 fish daily bag*

Harvest and release of channel catfish remained low in 2011. A total of 1,168 catfish were harvested and 719 released. There were 137 harvested catfish measured during the angler survey, with an average length of 18.5 inches and range of 11 to 29 inches. The catch rate for anglers seeking channel catfish was 0.43 fish per hour, with a harvest rate of 0.29 fish per hour.

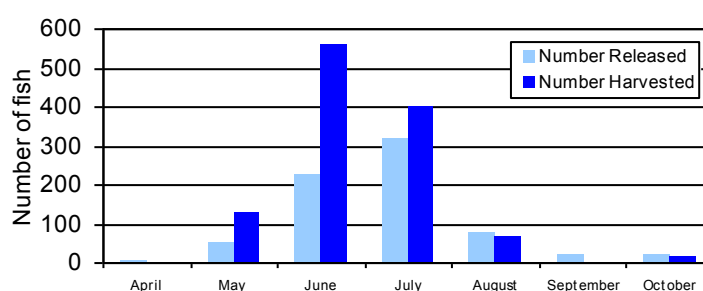
Monthly harvest of catfish peaked in June and remained good through July. Catch and harvest was low in the other months of the survey.



Channel Catfish Caught Per Year



Channel Catfish Caught Per Month

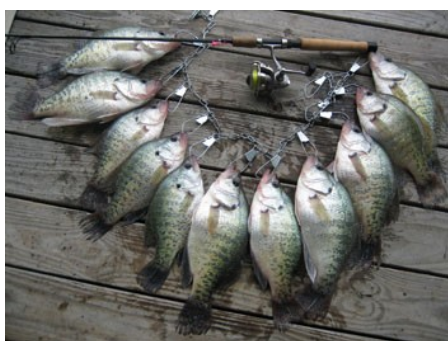


Crappie

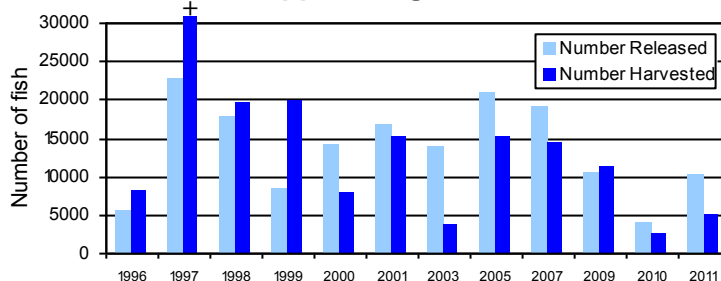
2011 Regulations: *10-inch minimum length limit, 15 panfish daily bag*

Crappie catch was improved in 2011, but continues to remain below the long term average. There were an estimated 4,935 crappie harvested and 10,195 released. The average length of harvested crappie was 10.9 inches. The largest crappie measured in the angler survey was 16 inches. Crappie anglers caught 1.7 crappie per hour, and harvested 0.54 crappie per hour. Angler compliance with the 10 minimum length limit continues to be very good.

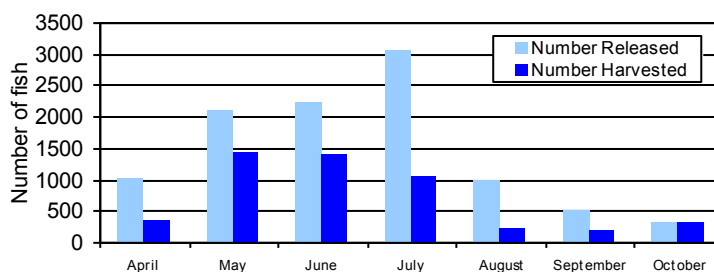
Crappie harvest was highest in May and June, but total catch peaked in July.



Crappie Caught Per Year



Crappie Caught Per Month



Walleye

2011 Regulations: Daily bag limit may include 2 walleye greater than 15 inches but less than 20 inches and 1 walleye over 28 inches. There is a slot limit protecting walleye 20 through 28 inches.

Total walleye catch was improved at Sherman Reservoir in 2011. The harvest (7,316) was the highest ever recorded during the angler survey, while released fish (10,360) was near the long term average. Walleye anglers averaged a total catch rate of 0.46 walleye per hour and a harvest rate of 0.24 fish per hour.



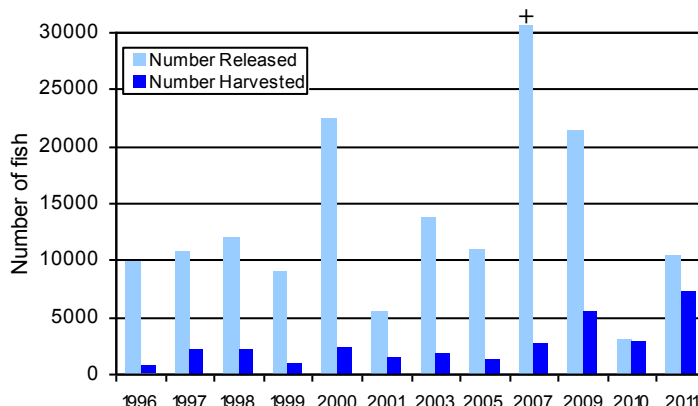
Walleye fishing success was consistently good during the entire survey period. May and June produced the highest catches, but walleye continued to be harvested throughout the late summer and early fall months.

With the special walleye regulations in place, nearly all harvested walleye were between 15 and 20 inches long. The average length of harvested walleye was 17.2 inches. The highest number of released walleye were under 15 inches, with fairly good numbers from 15 to 20 inches also. There was a small number of walleye released in the protected slot size from 20 to 28 inches long. Only a few walleye over 28 inches were caught during the survey.

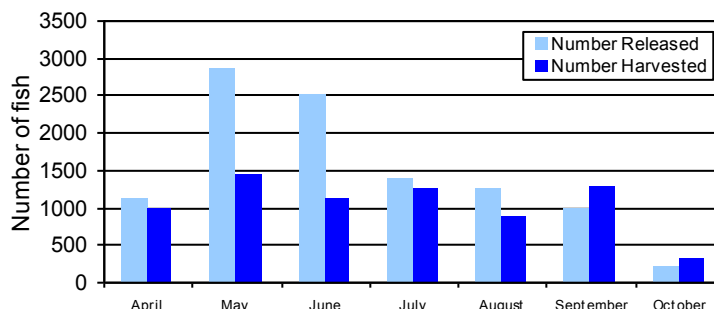
Compliance with the walleye size limit was very good, with only 1% of walleye harvested under the legal size of 15 inches, and 3% in the protected slot from 20 to 28 inches.



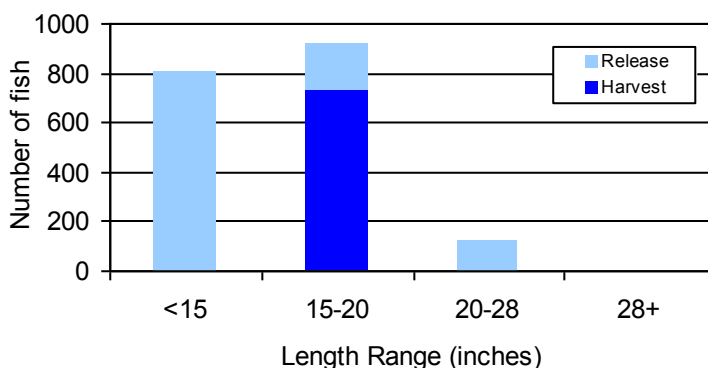
Walleye Caught Per Year



Walleye Caught Per Month



Size of Walleyes Caught by Anglers



White Bass

2011 Regulations: 15 fish daily bag, no more than one fish over 18 inches in daily bag

White bass angling success continued a downward trend at Sherman Reservoir during 2011. There were only 4,312 white bass harvested, the lowest since 2003. Anglers only caught and released 3,774 fish. Catch rates for anglers seeking white bass were also lower, with 0.98 fish caught per hour and 0.42 harvested per hour.

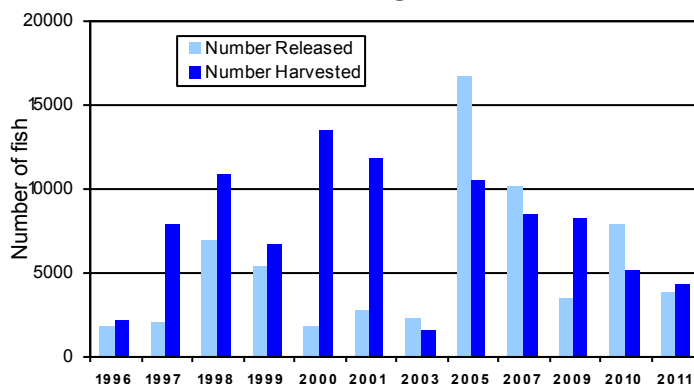


The majority of the white bass catch occurred during the months of August, September, and October.

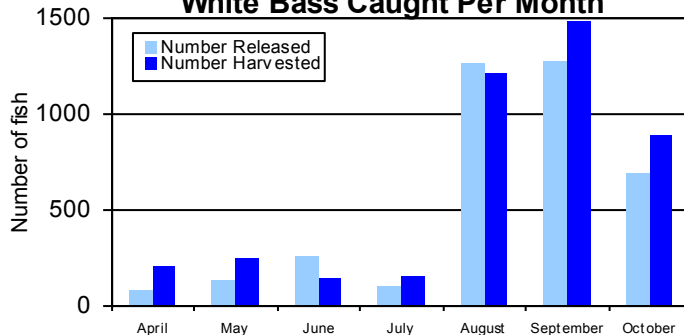
Harvested white bass ranged from 8 to 15 inches. The average length of white bass harvested during the survey period was 11.7 inches.



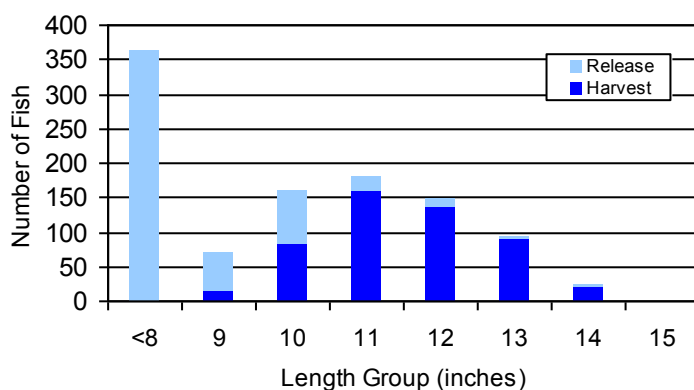
White Bass Caught Per Year



White Bass Caught Per Month

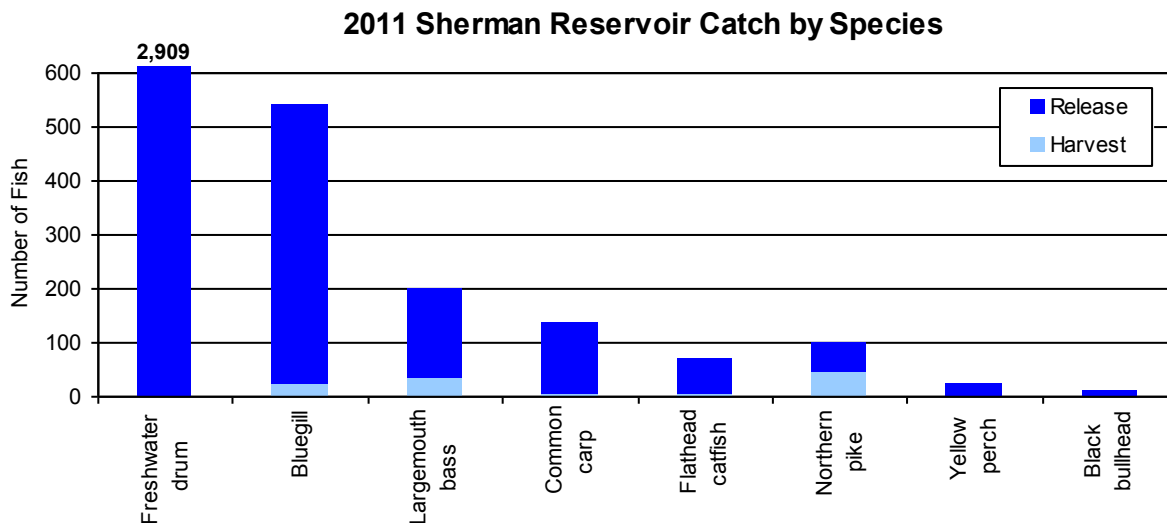


Size of White Bass Caught by Anglers



Miscellaneous Species

Eight other fish species were represented in the 2011 angler catch. Freshwater drum were most commonly caught, followed by bluegill and largemouth bass. Flathead catfish up to 35 inches and northern pike to 41 inches were measured during the angler survey.



For additional information about fisheries management at Sherman Reservoir, please contact the NGPC Kearney office at 308-865-5310 or by email at the addresses listed below.

District Manager: Brad Newcomb: brad.newcomb@nebraska.gov

Biologist: Brad Eifert: brad.eifert@nebraska.gov